

Questions for DCI as Posed by EEO Advisory Panel

1. If EEO goals for recruitment, mid-level entrance and upward advancement for minorities are not achieved, would you favor instituting an alternative policy of explicit recruitment, training and promotion objectives for minority employees?

We can only assume that the phrase "explicit recruitment" is a euphuism for a minority quota program of some kind. Since the word "training" is also used, we further assume that these applicants would not be "qualified" for their initial assignment but would be employed for their "potential."

The Office of Personnel has discussed ideas along this line several times before. It has been our conclusion that such an attempt would be extremely vulnerable to the charge of reverse discrimination, since a program of this kind certainly could not and should not be kept secret. Such a charge could be levied not only by Agency employees but, more importantly, by qualified applicants who are denied employment while others substantially less qualified or unqualified are hired. If we could not find enough qualified applicants to fill our personnel requirements, the situation would be much different. As you know, such is not now the case.

We also feel it worthy of note that the former Director has repeatedly and publicly taken the position that we will aggressively pursue an affirmative minority employment program but that we will not lower employment standards while so doing.

2. When should the Agency's EEO complaint system be examined to assure ourselves that it is being freely and profitably used by employees? How would you suggest such an "audit" be conducted, and by whom?

We suggest that an Inspector from the Office of the Inspector General conduct an audit of the EEO complaint system. Obviously, you need an impartial audit; and we can think of no Agency component which meets this requirement better than the Office of the Inspector General. We suggest, however, that the designated Inspector make contact with the Director, EEO to ascertain when there are enough cases to justify an audit. This audit would, of course,

point out problems, errors in handling, and would suggest changes in procedures or other courses of action that will ensure the maximum in impartiality and resolution of the problems posed.

3. Do you believe that employees who use the EEO complaint system have confidence in the Agency's subjectivity, its impartiality? If not, how might they acquire that confidence? How can the fear of retribution be reduced?

We assume, of course, that "subjectivity" in this question is a typographical error and the word "objectivity" was intended instead. We have no reason to believe that those involved in the EEO complaint system have been anything but impartial. To be candid, and this applies not only to this subject but to many other issues in life, individuals appear to acquire confidence when there is a resolution of their problem at least partially in their favor. It would appear, though, that if our suggestion concerning the Inspector General's Office auditing the complaint system is adopted, this report will point up where there is a lack of confidence and how objectivity and impartiality might be further improved. As regards fear of retribution, we can only hope that an individual who believes that he is the victim of such action would bring the matter to the immediate attention of the Director, EEO or the Inspector General, as the case may be; and that a supervisor who is guilty of such improper action would be dealt with accordingly. Relying on the good faith of most of our supervisors and employees, I do not honestly believe, at this time, that there are many employees who have to fear retribution. We believe that many supervisors are conscientiously attempting to achieve the goals set forth in our EEO Affirmative Action Plan.

4. What is the status of the CIA Opportunity Program?

If the "CIA Opportunity Program" means Upward Mobility, a CIA Opportunity Program Panel has met several times under the aegis of the EEO office. While the program developed by the Panel is not yet approved, the consensus of the Panel members is that it should be operated on a Career Service basis rather than Agency-wide. This position is in recognition of the Agency policy for decentralized personnel management and of the long-time practice of converting qualified clerical and technical personnel to professional status.

In FY 1975 the Agency conversion to professional status totaled 236, of which 97 were from technical status and 139 from clerical. The goal for FY 1976 is 224. The proposed program would be structured on the more formal Civil Service Commission guidelines, rather than the individual Career Service practices now in effect. In addition to this CIAOP Panel proposal, there is in existence in the Agency a program for the upward mobility of disadvantaged and unemployable individuals from the ghetto areas of Washington, D. C., whereby the Agency sponsors between 15 and 20 individuals each year into CSC training courses in typing and filing, with subsequent assignment to Agency positions. This program has been in effect since 1969.

5. How much weight/consideration should be given to a supervisor's or manager's "human resource management performance" when he's being considered for promotion to or within managerial levels?

This is a difficult question and a situation that may differ from manager to manager. There are some managers and/or supervisors who, by the nature of their positions and the mix of their subordinates, have little impact in this field. Obviously, not much weight can be given to their role in human resource management performance as it relates to EEO--translated perhaps as the proper supervision and/or correct or imaginative development of minority employees. Others may play a big role and, while I cannot give you a quantitative answer, we would assume that this should be given a reasonable weight in rating any manager or supervisor. EEO goals, affirmative action plans, etc., are not to be accepted or rejected at the whim of the supervisor. These are Agency policies and should be followed. Those who do not should be very carefully considered before being advanced or placed into managerial assignments where enlightened managerial techniques are essential.

6. What punitive actions, if any, should be taken against discriminating supervisors or managers?

Simply stated: that which the law provides for. Rating officials, supervisors and managers should always be alert to the possibility of this improper action on the part of their subordinate supervisors. We would hope that a "discriminating" supervisor would be a rare bird in this Agency.

7. A feeling of emphasis on youth is becoming widespread, with many older people believing that "once past age 40, if you haven't made it, then forget it." Is this inherent in current policy now, and will it continue?

It is perhaps inevitable that older employees perceive that policies favor younger employees and vice versa. The younger employees are in the grades that tend to receive faster promotions, creating an impression that career development favors them. The older employees are in the higher grades, creating an impression that they control the power structure. Of the employees in grades GS-16 and 17, only 11 are under age 40. Fewer than 10 percent of the GS-15's are under 40.

Some demographic factors are leading to what might seem youth-oriented policies. The simple fact is that youth is becoming a scarce resource in the Agency. During the next five years, our employee group under age 35 will shrink by 25 percent. At the same time, the average age of our employees will rise from 39 to 41, and some 50 percent of our employees will be older than 40. If grade creep is controlled, this means that a comparatively larger number of our lower-graded positions will be filled by relatively older employees than in the past. At the same time, it will be necessary to establish career development paths that keep Agency employment attractive for our younger employees. Clearly, we will have to reward ability, whatever the age.

Some older employees will have splendid opportunities. Those in the 40-44 age group are in an advantageous position because they are a relatively small feeder group that will supply replacements for many executives who will retire within the next five years. The group right behind, 35-39, is a relatively large group, and some of them also are being identified for executive development.

Other than under the influence of such demographic factors, Agency policies are moving away from conscious favoring of younger employees. Age restrictions on such courses as the Midcareer are being done away with. The policies on retirement age have been relaxed. Mr. Colby, as DCI, had stressed the need for identifying submarginal performers at a relatively younger age, rather than pressuring older employees for early retirement.

The experience and training of our older employees is a valuable asset to the Agency. As the Agency matures, it should seek an expanded program to provide training and refresher education to maintain the skills and currency of knowledge of older employees so that they continue to feel challenged and effective.